

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Office Action, Applicants amend the application and seek reconsideration thereof. In this response, Applicants amend Claims 1, 3 and 5. Applicants do not cancel or add any claims. Accordingly, Claims 1-8 are pending.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)/103(a)

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)/103(a) as being anticipated by, and alternatively obvious over, U.S. Patent No. 6,245,460 to Choi, et al. ("Choi").

In making the rejection, the Examiner relies on Choi to anticipate or alternatively render obvious Claims 1-4. However, Applicants note that, in light of the amendments submitted herewith to independent Claims 1 and 3, Choi does not appear to be a proper reference. Specifically, Choi has a filing date of August 28, 1998, which is more than five months after Korean Patent Application No. 1998-7854 was filed (e.g., March 10, 1998). The Examiner has acknowledged in a teleconference that, as amended, independent Claims 1 and 3 have the benefit of the earlier Korean Patent Application filing date. Therefore, amended independent Claims 1 and 3 are neither anticipated by, nor obvious over, Choi.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of amended independent Claims 1 and 3. Claims 2 and 4 depend from Claims 1 and 3, respectively. Therefore, the rejected dependent claims are not anticipated or obvious for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims.

II. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejects Claims 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,721,071 to Sonobe, et al. ("Sonobe").

In order to render a claim obvious, the relied upon reference must teach or suggest every limitation of the claims such that the invention as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one skilled in the art. Among other limitations, amended independent Claim 5 recites dissolving a coal tar pitch or a petroleum pitch in an organic solvent to remove all organic-

insoluble components therefrom and to obtain organic-soluble components. Applicants submit that at least this limitation is neither taught nor suggested by Sonobe.

In making the rejection, the Examiner relies on Sonobe to show a petroleum pitch having a quinoline-insoluble content of one percent by weight (Example 4). In maintaining the rejection, the Examiner notes that Applicants' claims do not recite that all organic-insoluble components are removed from the pitch. Thus, Applicants submit that Sonobe does not teach or suggest removal of all organic-insoluble components, as recited in amended independent Claim 5 (emphasis added).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of amended independent Claim 5. Claims 6-8 depend from amended independent Claim 5 and are not obvious at least for the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

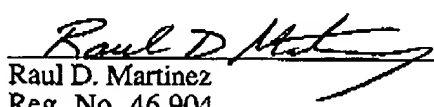
In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending (1) are in proper form, (2) are neither obvious nor anticipated by the relied upon art of record, and (3) are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 9/2, 2003


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION:

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on September 2, 2003.


Lillian E. Rodriguez

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September 2, 2003

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